



## Media Advisory

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For more information and to attend contact:  
Anu Palan, Women Thrive  
202 884 8399 or [apalan@womenthrive.org](mailto:apalan@womenthrive.org)

Leaders from several faith, international development and women's organizations will join forces on Wednesday on Capitol Hill to call on the new Administration and Congress to put women and girls in developing countries at the center of current efforts to reform U.S. foreign assistance.

The briefing, organized by the Women, Faith and Development Alliance (WFDA), in cooperation with bipartisan Congressional sponsors Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY) and Rep. Kay Granger (R-TX), will showcase the broad support that exists for the view that effective foreign assistance must focus its efforts on women, who are the majority of the world's poor. WFDA is a boundary-breaking alliance of communities that have not traditionally worked together, advocating for their common belief that efforts to end global poverty will fall short without a focus on women's empowerment.

Speakers at the September 30 event will include Rep. Nita Lowey and Rep. Granger, along with Ken Hackett, President, Catholic Relief Services; Abed Ayoub, CEO, Islamic Relief; Mahnaz Afkhami, President and CEO, Women's Learning Partnership; George F. Ward, Senior Vice President, World Vision; Rev. Ann Tiemeyer, Program Director, National Council Of Churches; Harriett Jane Olson, CEO, United Methodist Women and Aaron Dorfman, Vice President, American Jewish World Service. It will be moderated by Ritu Sharma, Co-Founder and President of Women Thrive Worldwide, a co-convenor of WFDA.

The event will be followed by an 'Advocacy Day' the same afternoon, when WFDA members will visit with Congressional offices to carry the same message, asking them to ensure that gender is integrated into U.S. foreign assistance.

The groundbreaking WFDA alliance was launched in April 2008 at *Breakthrough: the WFDA Summit to End Global Poverty* at the Washington National Cathedral. Since the Summit, the concept of WFDA has spread outside the U.S., with similar Alliances underway in Liberia and the Asia-Pacific. The Alliance is expected to release soon its first impact report, documenting the impact of the \$1.4 billion in commitments to programs and advocacy for women and girls that were made at the Breakthrough Summit.